

WASHINGTON LETTER.

(From our Regular Correspondent.)

WASHINGTON, December 19.

Congress is looking forward as gleefully to its two weeks' Christmas holiday, which is to begin next Thursday, as though it had been in session for six months, instead of two weeks, and every serious proposition looking towards the transaction of business is now met with "Oh, wait until after the recess," and after the recess it will have just two months to a day to pass all of the regular appropriation bills and to transact any other business, with a good prospect for an extended period of filibustering in the House, if the Nicaragua Canal Bill is pushed, as its friends now say that it will be. Several members of the House have openly said that they would filibuster against that measure as long as nature held out, and that they would not hesitate to hang up appropriation or any other bills to prevent its going through the House. These men are not idle talkers or men who can be bought or cajoled into changing their minds, but men who are conscientiously opposed to the principle involved in that bill and determined to fight it with all the parliamentary weapons at their command. Those who favor an extra session of the next Congress and fear that Mr. Cleveland will not call it, whatever they may think of the Nicaragua Canal Bill, are not likely to overwork themselves to prevent the failure of one or more appropriation bills, which would make an extra session a necessity.

The opponents of the Anti-Option Bill are now loudly claiming that the past week in the Senate has demonstrated that the bill is as good as defeated. They claim the failure of Senator Washburn to get a day named to vote on the bill before the holiday recess as a victory; also the deciding vote in favor of adjournment cast by Vice-President Morton when the Senate was a tie on the question of adjourning from Thursday to Monday or sitting on Friday for the consideration of the Anti-Option Bill.

Senator Peffer says that for Congress to repeal that section of the Interstate Commerce Law which prohibits pooling by railroads, as the railroad men are now asking, would be to undo the whole law, as, according to his understanding at the time, the prevention of railroad pooling was the principal object aimed at in the enactment of the law.

Representative Otis of Kansas tried to get unanimous consent for the adoption of a resolution by the House instructing the Ways and Means Committee to report a bill providing for an income tax, but objection was raised by Representative Springer, Chairman of that Committee.

The Commissioner of Internal Revenue estimates that if the tax on whiskey be increased from 90 cents to \$1.25 a gallon, as proposed by a bill introduced by Representative Scott of Illinois, it would add \$35,000,000 to the revenues of the Government for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1893. It is not probable, however, that Mr. Scott's bill will ever get reported to the House, as Chairman Springer of the Ways and Means Committee, which would have to report it, is on record as opposing an increase of more than 10 cents a gallon in the tax on whiskey.

Representative Hatch, Chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, predicts that the duty on sugar will be restored by the next Congress and the present bounty on domestic sugar abolished.

Post-office Department officials are chuckling over having discovered and put a stop to some thrifty tricks among the fourth-class postmasters. Just after the result of the election became known resignations of Republican postmasters accompanied by recommendations for the appointment of their successors began to pour into the Department. At first the resignations were accepted and new appointments made, but the number of resignations and recommendations became so large that suspicion was aroused and an investigation made. Then it was learned that the retiring postmasters were making a good thing out of turning their offices over to Democrats, who, of course, hoped to be able to retain their hold on the office under the Cleveland Administration. Mr. Wamaker then issued an order that no resignations of postmasters were to be accepted for the remainder of this Administration except for extraordinary cause.

There is a very decided difference of opinion existing as to the motive that Representative Anthony of Texas had in introducing his bill providing for a suspension of the granting of pensions under the Dependent Pension Law and the stopping of all payments upon pensions that have been granted under that law. Most people believe that Mr. Anthony is a sort of crank. At any rate he must have known that such a bill, even if allowed to be voted on by the Committee on Rules, could not possibly obtain a corporal's guard of votes in the House.

Joseph Baby, of Columbia, Pa., suffered from brain trouble for some time, and was cured by the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills.

Boys' rubber boots, sized ones to five, \$1.50, at Shoemaker's. -Adv.

Wonderful Insect Illumination.

The secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, Professor Langley, has been experimenting with Cuban fireflies with a view to discovering the manner in which the illumination they emit is generated. He says that the light they give is the "cheapest" in the world—produced, that is to say, with the least heat and the smallest expenditure of energy—and he believes that a successful imitation of it would prove a most profitable substitute for gas or electricity. The insects are beetles two inches long and belong to the family of "snapping bugs," so called because when one of them is laid on its back it snaps itself into the air with a clicking sound. The secret of the light this firefly gives is as yet undiscovered.

Apparently it is connected in some way with the mysterious phenomena of life, and chemists and physicists have sought in vain to explain its origin. On each side of the animal's thorax is a luminous membrane spot, and these flash at intervals, so that the Cubans put a dozen of the insects in a cage together and obtain a continuous illumination bright enough to read by. This light is accompanied by no perceptible heat, and is seemingly produced with no expenditure of energy. How great an improvement it represents upon all known artificial lights can be imagined when it is stated that in candle light, lamp light or gas light the waste is more than 99 per cent. -American Analyst.

A Chronic Case.
Known, chiefly by correspondence, to many persons is a certain invalid who spends her days in studying her "case" and writing about it. Her letters are long, full of unpleasant details and so burdened with inquiries and requests that they have to be answered at almost equal length, and most of them are addressed to men and women to whom time is precious.

Sometimes the invalid asserts that the use of a typewriter would relieve unfavorable symptoms, and asks a hundred questions about the different machines. Again, she finds it necessary to divert her mind, and turns to literature, relying on an author to tell her what and how to write. Then she resolves to make an experiment in treatment, and canvasses by letter for a worthless subscription book that she may gain the money to do so.

But always her "case" is directly or indirectly the theme of the many closely written pages. All things past, present and to come are related to her various afflictions. In the words of a Persian proverb, "The sun shines that the world may see her wounds." -Youth's Companion.

On Collecting Autographs.

The most elementary form of the stranger's letter is of course the application for an autograph. This application is now reduced to such a system that it causes little inconvenience and should not be refused. There is usually sent with the request a blank card on which the name is to be written, with an envelope stamped and addressed for its return. Nothing can be more unobtrusive or mechanical, though the line of propriety is at once passed, we may say, where two cards are sent, the second one being obviously for exchange purposes or perhaps for sale.

The wary author never, I suspect, writes on both cards, since he does not aim to help out a mere business transaction. Where any applicant goes farther and asks an original letter or copied passage, the affair becomes more serious, and some authors and public men ignore such requests altogether, as being much more serious consumers of time. -T. W. Higginson in Harper's Bazar.

Aunt Scinda's Four Hundred.

"An old negro woman has established a new theocracy at Grenada, Miss.," said J. H. B. Miller, of Coffeyville. "Her name is Scinda, and her followers are called 'Scinda's Band.' They number about 400. Scinda is their queen, and rules her flock with an iron rod. They use no Bibles at their meetings, for each member is supposed to know it by heart. If Scinda asks them a Biblical question they are supposed to have an answer at once. They have their meetings every Sunday evening and they are interesting to observe. The congregation—men and women—are decked out in costly ribbons and beads. Their chants are as weird as the sob and sighs of graveyard trees. They dance to the music of the banjo and tambourine until they are nearly exhausted, and then they go home." -St. Louis Republic.

The Rag Doll.

The rag doll, dearer to the heart of childhood than any other sort of doll, is quite the fashionable doll par excellence at the present moment. Unlike the one our grandmothers made for their little ones, the one cherished by the little folks of today is of flesh colored silk jersey cloth or of cotton balbriggan of the same color. Its body is filled with cotton, and its hair is in many rings of yellow single zephyr stitched on in loops. The face is painted, and when it is necessary to clean it this face can be repainted after the rest has been washed, as it can be without injury. -Detroit Free Press.

An Important Appeal.

Advertisements, especially of the personal kind, will frequently reward the searcher for unexpected antichimaxes. The following appeared in a New York paper not long ago: "Willie, return to your distracted wife and frantic children! Do you want to hear of your old mother's suicide? You will if you do not let us know where you are at once. Anyway, send back your father's colored meerschaum!" -New York Tribune.

Indian Blood Is Prevalent.

People of Indian blood predominate in Para, Brazil, and are found in all classes, from the savage and half-savage to the capital and the most advanced. There are very few Portuguese or Africans, and the descendants of both these races show a large admixture of Indian blood. -Philadelphia Ledger.

THE CABIN ON THE CLAM.

Lonely, you say, with mighty arch
Of sky so grandly bending;
By bright hued clouds and glittering stars
A tender message sending?

Joyless! When out of crimson cloud
The sunrise pours its glory,
Morn after morn repeating well
Aurora's cheerful story?

Peaceless! When night with noiseless feet
From fields of herbs and flowers,
Sweet odors in her mantle dark
Bears to this cot of ours?

Like faintest sounds of distant seas
Pounding some castle hoary,
We hear the great world's roar and fret
And trace her changeful story.

As far away white gleaming sail,
Turning a bend of river,
A noble deed with radiant flash
Makes every heartstring quiver.

So, thankful, where the kindly stars
Spangle the blue with beauty,
We look and breathe the fervent wish
That all may do their duty.

-Boston Transcript.

Gloves at Afternoon Tea.

Gloves, the crowning finish of a well dressed woman's costume in public, have been of late years greatly misused in American society. One sees them worn at tea tables by the woman elected to represent the hostess in pouring tea, and even at dinner tables, where the wearers have been known to sit through many courses with their right hands bared, the hand of the right glove tucked under the wrist, and the entire left glove kept on. From time immemorial the habitual dinner goers of good society have removed both gloves immediately after taking their places at the table, and have resumed them upon returning to the drawing room, or after using the finger bowls, and before arising from the feast.

Any departure from accepted custom that has only eccentricity or a desire for innovation to recommend it should be avoided; hence there seems no cause for taking up the curious fashion just mentioned, probably set in a heedless moment by some leader of vogue or by an unfortunate woman of rank whose hand was made unrepresentative by a disfiguring injury. -Ladies' Home Journal.

Jenny Lind's Frankness.

Jenny Lind's judgment of books, though undirected by anything like literary training, always showed independence and penetration. She was a devoted lover of Carlyle's writings, and the last book she read before her death was Mr. Norton's volume of the correspondence between Carlyle and Emerson. No doubt her admiration for the great denouncer of shams was largely due to the intense sincerity of her own character, which made it impossible for her to tolerate even those slight deviations from strict truthfulness which are seldom taken seriously, but are looked upon as the accepted formula of society, "I am so glad to see you," would hardly have been her greeting to a visitor whose call was inconvenient or ill timed. But, on the other hand, her downrightness of speech had nothing in common with that of Mrs. Candour; it carried no discourtesy with it. -R. J. McNeill in Century.

Mixed Relationship.

There is a family in the southern part of the county whose complicated relationship beats anything upon record. The family name is Runk. A few years ago the Runk family consisted of father and two grown sons. In the same neighborhood there lived a widow and her two comely daughters. The oldest one of the Runk boys married one of the widow's daughters. The young man's father married the other daughter. The other one of the boys married the mother. The question that now bothers the father is whether he is his mother-in-law's father-in-law or his daughter-in-law's son-in-law, and, if both, which the most. -Mascoutah (Ills.) Cor. Chicago Tribune.

Amateur Composers.

The amateur composers of England include the names of the late prince consort, the late Duke of Albany, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Marquis of Devonshire, Lady Baker, Lady Arthur Hill, Lady White and the Hon. Mrs. Malone—all having created melodies of more or less lasting quality. The Earl of Dunraven has organized two orchestras—one at Oxford and the other at Cambridge—of forty members each. Lady Mary Dalrymple is a member of a very successful orchestra composed of ladies. -New York Press.

Japanese Hairpins.

Japanese women put up their hair with wooden, ivory or tortoise shell pins seven or eight inches in length and fully half an inch wide. The pins are usually carved, and are often capped with pivoted figures, which dance with every motion of the wearer. -Baltimore Herald.

A Startling Telegram.

Ten girls in a composition class were told to write a telegram such as would be suitable to send home in case of a railway accident while traveling. One of the girls wrote: "Dear Papa—Mamma is killed. I am in the refreshment room." -Exchange.

Insanity was once looked on as the work of demons. It is now regarded as a purely physical infirmity, perhaps inherited from those who had somehow violated physical law, or induced by our own transgression.

According to an English scientist, the red in flowers is a single pigment, soluble in water and decolorized by alcohol, but capable of being restored by the addition of acids.

In the fourteenth century the French set a fashion of cutting the edges of the garments in the form of grape leaves.

The population of many South Sea islands manufacture their entire suits from the products of the palm tree.

A number of the houses in Berlin are numbered with enormous figures, which can be easily observed at night.

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